(c) if so, what steps are being taken to check the alarming situation in the interest of safety of passengers, rolling stock, tracks, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise. However, safety is an important concern of Indian Railways and several steps are taken by Railways to ensure safe rail travel.

**Foreign Direct Investment in Education Sector**

*254. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to open Elementary Education Sector to Foreign Direct Investment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have set up any Committee to examine the subject;

(d) if so, recommendation made by the Committee; and

(e) reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) Proposals of Foreign Direct Investment in the education sector are being examined on case by case basis.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

**Joint ventures in milk production**

*255. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to allow joint

ventures between milk co-operatives in the country and private players including multinationals offering 51 per cent stake by them; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) No Sir, the Government is not considering any such proposal to allow Joint Ventures between milk cooperatives & private players including multinationals. A wholly owned Company of NDDB, through its subsidiary Mother Dairy Foods Ltd. has decided to enter into Joint Ventures with State Cooperative Dairy Federations for the purpose to strengthening the marketing of their milk and milk products. These joint ventures are purely voluntary in nature. The pattern of share holding is in the ratio of 51:49 between Mother Dairy Food Ltd. and the concerned State Federation.

**UGC grants for NER Universities**

†*258. SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of universities in North-Eastern States for which University Grants Commission has sanctioned grant and 'Heads' under which the same has been sanctioned alongwith details of the funds sanctioned and released during Ninth Five Year Plan, State-wise/year-wise/University-wise;

(b) the names of universities in North Eastern Region which have utilised the sactioned grant and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the grants proposed to be provided to each of the universities of all the said States during Tenth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) According to the information furnished by the University Grants Commission (UGC), out of the 10 Universities in the North Eastern Region, there are 5 Central Universities which receive both Plan and Non-Plan grant from UGC and rest are the State Universities which pre-dominantly

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.